1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

After confinement, the woman is regarded as unclean for a month. During this time she must not take off her shoes in a strange house, nor should she bare her feet in her own house in the presence of strangers. For a year following confinement, she is expected to observe the following food taboos. She must not partake of ringed seal, white whale, fresh fish, or raw thong-seal. She is forbidden to eat whale-meat in the fall, but may do so in the winter. She may eat the boiled meat of a thong-seal caught in the river, but not if it be caught in the sea. A woman, after confinement, is permitted to eat reindeer-meat in any shape or form. There is no doubt that these taboos are intended to prevent the unclean woman from coming in contact with animals that serve as the source of subsistence of the tribe; but it is a striking fact that the taboos are observed in reference to sea-animals only. Other taboos are for the protection of the child. Children in general, and the new-born in particular, are, more than grown-up people, subject to the danger of becoming the victims of the kalau. Children's souls are very shy and inexperienced. The least fright may cause them to leave the body, and, after they have once left, they are unable to find the entrance that leads back into the body. They are also apt to lose their way. Therefore during the entire winter the new-born child must not be taken out of the house, where it is under the protection of the family guardians. In case of absolute necessity, the mother must keep it in her bosom under her coat, and must not take it out when in a strange house. Only after the spring equinox may the child be taken out of the house in safety. The after-birth is put in a bag and hung on a pole some distance away from the village (Plate XII, Fig. 2, opp. p. 97).

DEATH. — As with all other primitive people, death does not appear to the Koryak as a natural process, — most people are killed by the kalau, — but it happens that the Supreme Being and other supernatural beings may bring about the death of man as a punishment for an infraction of a taboo, or for a failure to offer sacrifice. Shamans frequently inflict death upon men. On the other hand, there is a tradition according to which it was Big-Raven (Quikinn-a'qu) that caused people to die.

The soul (uyi'čit), or, to be more exact, the chief soul, of the man, frightened by the attack of the kalau upon it, deserts the body, and rises to the Supreme Being. According to some tales, the kala himself pulls the soul out of the human body, and sets it free to go off to the sky, in order to possess himself of the body or of the other souls of the deceased.

Though a man cannot live without a soul, there is apparently some other vital principle, or a secondary soul. I did not learn its name, and heard nothing definite relating to this accessory soul; but some vital principle[1] is

[1] Mr. Bogoras says of the Chukchee (Chukchee Materials, p. 17), that they have five or six souls (wwi'rit). Many North American Indians believe that man has two or more souls, while the Yukaghir believe that he has three. As to the Yukaghir, I admit that the conception of these souls has been borrowed by them from the Yakut, with whom each of the three souls has a name of its own.

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 Ry4 Koryak Ry4

774 761 implied in the words wuyr'vi ("breathing") and wu'yil-wu'yil ("shadow"). Furthermore, the demarcation between life and death is very ill defined. The dead body is believed not to be deprived of the ability to move. The deceased may arise, if he is not watched. On the Taigonos Peninsula, the Reindeer Koryak told me that a Koryak, by name Ei'gelin, died a few years ago. It so happened that everybody in the house went to sleep, then he arose. When the people awoke, and saw that he was standing, they stabbed him with their knives; but he merely laughed. Then they tried to club him, but were unable to kill him. They dragged him to the fire, but could not burn him. He walked from house to house, saying, "Here, I am leading Ei'gelin." Finally a Russian undertook to burn him. He was given reindeer and a sledge, then he cut Ei'gelin to pieces and carted them away to be burned.

775 The soul does not leave earth at once. The person may be dead, but his soul is soaring high above him. The soul resembles a small fire. It is outside of the body during illness. If the illness is slight, the soul keeps close above the patient; and if it is severe, it is higher up, and farther away from him. Powerful shamans are able to cause the soul to return, and thus restore to life a person that has died recently. The Koryak Yulta, from Kamenskoye, told me that his father had died twice. The first time he died at sunset. A shaman, summoned from the Livaty settlement, spent all night beating the drum; and toward sunrise Yulta's father revived. He lived for a long time after that. After his recovery he told the people that he had been walking all alone in the other world for a long time. Finally he beheld a house, and near it he saw his fellow-villager Qatče'pin. He asked him, "How didst thou get here?" and Qatče'pin replied, "I sold to the Russian chief two dogs that I had promised to offer to the Supreme Being. On account of this I died." It so happened that Qatče'pin died the same night; and when Yulta's father revived, wood was being piled up for burning Qatče'pin's body.

776 761 Often death is brought about by attacks of the kalau, and it is believed that the kalau cut their victims. It is not quite clear how this is believed to be done. On the one hand, the kala seems to eat human flesh in the most material way, tearing out pieces of flesh from live people, and devouring their internal organs. The Koryak say that he likes human liver particularly well. On the other hand, the body of the deceased, before it is burned, does not show any signs of having been touched by any one. According to the Chukchee conception, evil spirits steal the soul (uwi'rit) in order to eat it, and they fatten it before feasting on it.[1] We find this conception in a clearer form among the Yakut. The evil spirits eat the soul kut, one of the three souls of men.

775 The Koryak have also a double conception of the country of the shadows. While the soul rises to the Supreme Being, the deceased and his other soul,

[1] Bogoras, Chukchee Materials, p. 17.

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 R94 Koryak R94

With reference to the Paren and Kamenskoye people, Dittmar says in another place that they are "of a restless, warlike nature, or, rather, they have the nature of robbers, which has made for them a number of enemies,"[1] and that the wandering Koryak visit them only in case of dire necessity. The Reindeer Koryak, on the other hand, are, according to Dittmar,[2] such an honest, straight-forward people, that he expresses a wish that the demoralizing influence of civilization should not touch their pure patriarchal life.

Maydell, on the contrary, considers the Koryak a wily people, who have caused a good deal of harm to the Russians by their pretended submission and treacherous revolts.[3]

Slunin says of the Maritime Koryak, that they are "more advanced, more receptive, have better morals (?), and are more sociable in their manners,"[4] than the Reindeer Koryak, but are not very hospitable; while hospitality, and readiness to come to the assistance of the needy, constitute, on the contrary, a distinctive trait of the nomadic Koryak.

Kennan[5] also praises the Reindeer Koryak for their honesty and hospitality, while the picture he draws of the Maritime Koryak is anything but attractive. "They are," says Kennan, "cruel and brutal in disposition, insolent to everybody, revengeful, dishonest, and untruthful. The settled Koraks of Penzhinsk Gulf are unquestionably the worst, ugliest, most brutal and degraded natives in all northeastern Siberia; more trouble than all the other inhabitants of Siberia and Kamchatka together."

Personally I believe that the principal traits of character of the Maritime and Reindeer Koryak are much alike. They are proud, independent, inclined to brag; their passions are easily aroused; they take offence readily, and try to avenge themselves by any possible means. They are hospitable and sociable with people in whom they have confidence, but do not conceal their dislike for those who are unfriendly to them, or who, for some reason or another, did not gain their favor. They do not fear death, and they cannot be frightened by anything. For reasons such as the death of a relative, quarrels, or wrath, suicide has frequently been committed among them, as well as among the Chukchee, even recently.

In former times, owing to these traits of character, feuds, or misunderstandings among the Koryak, or between them and other tribes, ended in mutual slaughter. At present, their manners are somewhat gentler, but in dealing with them one must always take into consideration their obstinacy, austerity, and dauntlessness.

Together with the Chukchee, the Koryak are the only Siberian tribe whose attitude toward the Russian authorities is that of almost perfect independence. However, the Russianized Koryak of the Okhotsk district, and

[1] Dittmar, Die Koriken, p. 12. [2] Ibid., p. 34. [3] Maydell, I, pp. 307–373.
[4] Slunin, I, p. 302. [5] Kennan, pp. 197, 203, 209.

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 Ry4 Koryak RY4

The Koryak extend their friendship also to the Russians, whose presents [609]
generally consist of tea, tobacco, baked bread, biscuits, flour, and other 572
imported articles. 574

A Koryak, on his arrival in a settlement or camp, makes his headquarters 437
in the house or tent of a friend, and while there partakes of the meals as a member of the family. The lads feed his dogs or guard his reindeer. Among the Maritime Koryak a place is reserved for his bed on the platform in the front part of the subterranean house, while among the Reindeer Koryak he passes the night in the host's own sleeping-tent or in a separate sleeping-tent. In ancient times the "friends" were met with fire from the hearth, obviously in demonstration of the amicable feelings of the hearth as the family protector, and of the host. At the present time, these friends, as all [576]
other visitors, are met with the greeting "Eh, ye'ti!" which means simply "Ah, thou hast come!" to which the visitor answers, "Ye'ti."

Clearly, the fraternities as a social institution have a utilitarian basis; 761
but we also find certain manifestations of a social feeling of altruistic character. Thus the announcement of the death of a member of the family, made by the relatives to all the inhabitants of the settlement or of the surrounding camps, is obviously intended as a warning of the danger from evil spirits, which caused the death. The neighbors thus informed at once take protective measures.[1]

As a rule, material support is offered by the more prosperous only to 476
relatives. In times of famine, however, the provisions are divided indiscriminately among all the inhabitants of the settlement who are in need. 731

If we disregard for a moment the influence of the Russians on the social 174
life of the Koryak, it can, I think, be asserted that the independent development of social forms among the Maritime Koryak could hardly have reached 565
the stage at which the nobility and the common people would appear as two 558
sharply defined hereditary classes. The brave warrior and the clever hunter, who, as a rule, ranked above the masses as protectors and providers of the group, lost their influential positions during famines in years when huntin and fishing had been unsuccessful. Not so with the Reindeer Koryak.

The concentration of fortunes in the form of large herds in the hands 174
of single individuals, and the perpetuation of these fortunes through inheri- 565
tance, might have furthered social differentiation, and led to the formation of 556
aristocratic families. In ancient times the possessor of a large herd had to be not merely a good shepherd, but a warrior well able to protect his herds against the attacks of enemies. Around him as a natural protector would cluster, first of all, groups of relatives, but also neighbors (na'mtumgin, "neighbor in camp") possessing but small herds or no herds at all. These people would become herdsmen subordinate in position, while it devolved on

[1] See Part I, p. 104.

11: Kennan--213-215 T-3 (1865) 1870 Koryak-1-2
116, 182, 758, 761, 888 Reindeer

"The bodies of the dead, among all the wandering tribes, are burned, together with all their effects, in the hope of a final resurrection of both spirit and matter; and the sick, as soon as their recovery becomes hopeless, are either stoned to death or speared. [214] We found it to be true, as we had been told by the Russians and the Kamtchadals, that the Koraks murdered all their old people as soon as sickness or the infirmities of age unfitted them for the hardships of a nomadic life. Long experience has given them a terrible familiarity with the best and quickest methods of taking life; and they often explained to us with the most sickening minuteness, as we sat at night in their smoky pologs, the different ways in which a man could be killed, and pointed out the vital parts of the body where a spear or knife thrust would prove most instantly fatal. I thought of De Quincey's celebrated Essay upon 'Murder Considered as one of the Fine Arts,' and of the field which a Korak encampment would afford to his 'Society of Connoisseurs in Murder.' All Koraks are taught to look upon such a death as the natural end of their existence, and they meet it generally with perfect composure. Instances are rare where a man desires to outlive the period of his physical activity and usefulness. They are put to death in the presence of the whole band, with elaborate but unintelligible ceremonies; their bodies are then burned, and the ashes suffered to be scattered and blown away by the wind.

These customs of murdering the old and sick, and burning the bodies of the dead, grow naturally out of the wandering life which the Koraks have adopted, and are only

illustrations of the powerful influence which physical laws exert everywhere upon the actions and moral feelings of men. They both follow logically and almost inevitably from the very nature of the country and cli-[215]mate. The barrenness of the soil in Northeastern Siberia, and the severity of the long winter, led man to domesticate the reindeer as the only means of obtaining a subsistence; the domestication of the reindeer necessitated a wandering life; a wandering life made sickness and infirmity unusually burdensome to both sufferers and supporters; and this finally led to the murder of the old and sick, as a measure both of policy and mercy. The same causes gave rise to the custom of burning the dead. Their nomadic life made it impossible for them to have any one place of common sepulture, and only with the greatest difficulty could they dig graves at all in the perpetually frozen ground. Bodies could not be left to be torn by wolves, and burning them was the only practicable alternative. Neither of these customs presupposes any original and innate savageness or barbarity on the part of the Koraks themselves. They are the natural development of certain circumstances, and only prove that the strongest emotions of human nature, such as filial reverence, fraternal affection, selfish love of life, and respect for the remains of friends, all are powerless to oppose the operation of great natural laws."